IN THE SPECIFICATION

The Title of the Invention on page 0, line 10 and page 1, line 1, has been amended, as follows:

SWITCHING FABRIC INCLUDING A PLURALITY OF CROSSBAR SECTIONS

Lines 4 - 10 of page 5 have been amended, as follows:

In the embodiment of Figure 2, each of the input ports receives data at a rate S (e.g., 8.0 Gbps) from data paths 7a - 7z and transmits data to the crossbar 6 at a rate of two times S (e.g., 16.0 Gbps). Buffering at the crossbar 6 using RAM in combination with the increased rate of transmission between the input ports and the crossbar 6 enables frames to be forwarded to the output ports 4 at a rate greater than the media speed (i.e., the data rate at which data frames are received at the input ports 2). The data is forwarded from the output ports 4 via data paths 5a - 5z.

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Lines 10 - 16 of page 5 have been amended, as follows:

Figure 3 shows an embodiment of input port 2 and output port 4 in the switching fabric of Figure 2. A corresponding LUE 9 (Figure 1) determines the destination output ports 4 for each data frame received at an input port 2 and identifies the output port 4 in the header of the data frame received at the input port 4. Each input port 2 includes an input RAM 10, an output queuer 12, at least one virtual output queue 14, and a frame selector 16. Each input port 2 maintains the at least one virtual output queue (VOQ) 14 in a RAM buffer for each output port 4. The size of the RAM buffer may be selected based upon the

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A2 input media speed relative to the aggregate data rate from an input port 2 to the crossbar 6.

Line 17, page 5 - line 2, page 6 has been amended, as follows.

A frame selector 16 selects frames to be forwarded across the crossbar 6 to the output ports 4. To provide for efficient forwarding of the frames, the frame A3 selector 16 partitions the data payload of the received data frame and appends each partition to header information to provide a data cell 51 as shown in Figure ~~4a~~ 4b. The input ports 2 communicate with sections 100 of the crossbar 6 to manage output congestion at each crossbar section as illustrated with reference to Figures 5 and 6. Such output congestion can occur if a data cell cannot be forwarded to an output port 4 because of an unavailability of locations in output queues 102 of a crossbar section 100.